

nothing but awkward silences over tea and cookies amid splendor and light, you say: When Worlds Collide. She puzzles over this, prefers Thoreau's Walden to anything by Jane Austen. You haven't read Austen but have seen the Laurence Olivier movie. You wonder if she has a wealthy aunt as you sit on an early Victorian couch, she on a Colonial rocker. Out the bay window the waves explode and spread in a lacy fanwork over the rocky ledges. You wonder if Walden has ever been made into a movie.

MANPOWER

You and this black guy are assigned a day long job. You end up unloading a boxcar full of pipe for the Portland Plumbing & Oil Co. He sits on a stack of pipe in the cool of the shade as you walk by with a 25 lb. elbow and says: Hey, man, wha' chew doin' bustin' you' ass fuh? In high school, the star

basketball, football, baseball & swimming star was black, and although you shared classes together, you never actually were introduced. He was school mascot -- pampered by teachers, coaches, and students (the talented and the rich). He was different and he was good. In a bar in Long Beach,

long after you've often reminisced of lost innocence in Maine, you lift a few with a gaggle of sailors who would lack a coherent vocabulary if the word nigger were removed from their mouths. At this point in your

life you decide to say something about bigotry, equality of opportunity, and national security.